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Prime Minister

FCS/82/41

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

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A.J.C. 19/3

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Poland: Soviet Factory Ships

1. Thank you for your letter of 3 March 1982. I have no wish to jump the gun. But equally we must be sure the gun is not jumped by the conclusion of contracts which restrict our scope for manoeuvre thereafter.

2. I have always recognised that what restrictions should be imposed on Soviet klondykers should be decided in the light of all the circumstances. In view of what you say about the uncertainty of these circumstances in relation to the Minch herring and mackerel fisheries, I agree that we should leave the matter for consideration until nearer the time on the basis of the following understanding:

- a) that officials from your, George Younger's and my departments should get together in good time before the Minch fisheries to consider the options and set them out for us;
- b) that we should not then find our freedom of manoeuvre restricted by "existing contracts" entered into before the start of the fisheries. This means ensuring that such contracts are not entered into between now and then;
- c) that we should continue to make it clear publicly that restrictions could be imposed. I suggest that the appropriate line to take is that what licences are issued to Soviet vessels will be decided nearer the time. Meanwhile no decisions have been taken one way or the other.

/3. If you are



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3. If you are content with this, perhaps these conclusions and their procedural follow-up can be registered at the meeting of MISC 64 which is taking place on 10 March.

4. Copies of this minute go to the recipients of your letter.

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(CARRINGTON)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
9 March 1982



9 MAR 1982

